

Neighborhood University
Implementor Neighborhoods
Matrix D1
Activity *Acquire University Heights for permanent community use.*

D1: 1 of 1

Sub-Activity Assist the community in exploring the ownership, management and programming plan that best meets the community's goals for University Heights.

Sub-Act University Heights Center is a nonprofit community center located in the historic University Heights School
Comment(s) in Seattle's University District on the corner of 50th and University Way Northeast. For nearly a century the facility has served the community. The building first opened its doors as an elementary school in 1903. Eighty-six years later, in 1989, the school was closed. Jason Wachs
10/26/05

After the closure, a neighborhood organization conducted a survey of local residents regarding the future of the building. Seventy-five percent agreed that it should continue to serve the public as a community center. In response, The University Heights Center for the Community Association was founded in 1990.

University Heights Center is home to a large variety of programming for adults and children. Over 150 groups utilize classroom space for meetings, workshops and ongoing classes. Activities range from dance classes, the Farmer's Market, pet training, to live theatrical performances.

The Center works closely with other organizations seeking to improve the University District. Seattle Youth Garden Works, The Working Zone, the Ave Planning Group, the University District Community Council, Seattle P-Patch, and the University Community Urban Center are busy at University Heights training homeless youth, building stronger community, and planning for the future. The Center considers these organizations valuable partners and provide free space for them in the building.

The Center provides many ongoing classes, programs, and events while also hosting several tenants including Able Child Care, Berkland Baptist Church, Farm Work Pesticide Project, Northwest Choirs, Puget Sound Community Schools, Rising Song Children's School of Music, SAFECO Neighborhood Academy, Seattle Ki Society, Sheldon & Associates, and the University District Farmer's Market.

Planning work on the Pro-Parks Project (University Way NE and NE 50th St.) called "University Heights Open Space Improvements" will begin in 2006. The Pro Parks Levy provides \$206,200 for the project costs including planning, design, and construction. The goal of this project is to create a community open space on the south side of University Heights. For more information contact:

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2004 Priority Summary: The City funded a business plan which includes options for acquisition or long-term leasing of the building. The University Heights staff is working with Department of Neighborhoods staff to strengthen the board as a first step in stabilizing the future of University Heights. Karen Ko
05/07/04

DON funded bus plan for U-Heights. No plans to do more by OED. [Steve Johnson, OED]

Unknown User
03/02/04

Office of Education staff/ University Heights to convene a committee to plan possible acquisition.

Karen Ko
02/06/04

Target Completion -Ongoing

Estimated Cost Existing Staff

Status In-Progress

Lead Agency/Contact Neighborhoods; Karen Ko, 233-3732

Priority Top

Implementor Neighborhoods

Matrix C1

Activity *Institute an employer assisted housing program in which major employers (e.g., UW) encourage employees to locate in the community through reduced loan fees and closing costs. UW has already agreed to make a program available to employees.*

C1: 1 of 1

Sub-Activity Establish regular reporting schedule between employers and community (The Ave Group, Chamber of Commerce, etc) to report on progress and get feedback.

Sub-Act Comment(s) The University is making it easier for its employees to purchase housing in the neighborhood through the Hometown Home Loan program. This program offers UW employees a series of discounts on loan fees, escrow, title, and related financing costs. Additional benefits are available to households with modest incomes and located in the City of Seattle.

Jason Wachs
09/07/05

Since bringing this program to campus in 1998, nearly 1000 UW employees have taken part. Over 300 of these were first time homebuyers.

The Great University Chamber of Commerce's Community Affairs Committee works with the University of Washington to report on progress and get feedback about housing issues and many other issues in the University District.

Housing is unclear what role they will play in this sub-activity. Their participation in this project was changed from "Lead" to "participating" and contact name removed from public view. [per Rick Hooper]

Dena Gazin
11/15/04

2004 Priority Summary: Office of Housing (OH) and Dept. of Neighborhoods (DON) to meet with the community in late October, 2004 to scope out next steps. Only after relationship/scope has been established will regular reporting occur.

Karen Ko
05/07/04

OH and DON need to meet with the community to scope out next steps; regular reporting doesn't make sense until there is something specific to report on. [Laura Hewitt Walker, OH]

Unknown User
03/03/04

Target Completion

Estimated Cost N/A

Status Not started

Lead Agency/Contact Neighborhoods; Karen Ko, 233-2045

Priority Second

Implementor Neighborhoods

Matrix C2

Activity *Institute a shared equity housing partnership program in which an institutional investor (limited partner) provides a share of the equity needed for an employee home purchase in exchange for a share of the resale price.*

C2: 1 of 1 **Sub-Activity** Re-examine completed homeownership report submitted to the City Council in 2001 and look for ways to leverage recommendations that would benefit the community.

Sub-Act Comment(s)	"At Home in Seattle" was a report on the state of housing in Seattle done by the Office of Housing. Some of the recommendations included in the report are included below. The report can be found online at http://www.seattle.gov/housing/07-FreePublications/AtHomeInSeattle/Default.htm	Jason Wachs 10/27/05
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Helping young families buy their first home:

The average-priced home in Seattle - at \$271,000 - requires a family income over \$90,000 a year, as well as a minimum of \$15,000 cash on hand for a down payment and closing costs. This price is out of reach for many families; after all, the median income in Seattle for a family of four is just over \$60,000, meaning that the median family cannot afford to buy the median-priced home.

For first-time homebuyers, who have not been able to cash in on rising home prices and who may have had trouble accumulating a down payment because of increasing rent costs, buying that first home can seem an almost insurmountable obstacle. To help them, the Office of Housing has worked with non-profit developers, banks, and community organizations to support moderate income families hoping to purchase their first home.

(1) Homes produced by non-profit organizations. Since 1990, Homesight, a non-profit homebuilder, has built over 165 homes affordable to moderate-income families. HomeSight provides its buyers with extensive counseling on budgeting, getting out of debt, going through the home mortgage process, and making home repairs. But, just as important, it then provides homes they can afford to buy. HomeSight builds efficient but attractive homes, often clustered around common courtyards and play spaces, and uses surplus property and housing funding to keep its homes affordable to new buyers. The Office of Housing has been a key collaborator with HomeSight, providing down payment assistance and construction financing.

Habitat for Humanity is another non-profit organization in the business of building homes for low and moderate income families. Habitat volunteers help homebuyers build or rehabilitate their own homes. The homebuyer's "sweat equity" work building the home replaces the conventional cash down payment required for most home purchases. Habitat then provides a no-interest 20-30 year mortgage.

(2) Hometown Home Loan Program. This innovative program encourages in-city home ownership by providing a variety of favorable loan options to employees of major institutions, including the City of Seattle, Seattle Public Schools and community colleges, and the University of Washington. Nearly 500 families have purchased homes with Continental Bank mortgages obtained through this program.

(3) Location Efficient Mortgage Program. This loan program, also offered in collaboration with Continental Bank, works with potential homeowners who choose an in-city home convenient to work and transit. The program is based on the assumption that homeowners who are less dependent on a car will have more money available to spend on a home. The program thus qualifies them for a somewhat more expensive home than they otherwise would have been able to afford.

(4) Hope Loan Program. This program through HomeSight provides down payment assistance to help low and moderate-income families purchase a home in Central or Southeast Seattle, Delridge, Duwamish, or South Park.

(5) Homeownership Opportunity Initiative. This initiative, sponsored by the AFL/CIO Housing Investment Trust and Fannie Mae, is available to members of labor unions and employees of the City and Port of Seattle. Through this program, homebuyers can qualify for an interest rate reduced by ½ percentage point for the first five years, mortgage insurance reduced by ¼ percentage point, and reduced closing costs.

(6) Community Homeownership Center (CHOC). The Community Homeownership Center (CHOC) is a community-based non-profit which was created to counsel would-be homebuyers on the borrowing process. CHOC alerts buyers to special mortgage programs, and gives referrals to various counseling agencies and lenders.

Helping seniors and low income families stay in their homes. Seattle's Home Repair and Weatherization Program helps low and moderate-income homeowners by providing low interest loans for major home repairs. It also offers free or low-cost home insulation and weatherization improvements. In 1999, the program served nearly 1,500 Seattle families with almost \$5 million in funds. Some 1,350 homes were weatherized, receiving better insulation or energy-efficient windows. And another 144 families were helped with comprehensive home repairs, including new roofs, plumbing, electrical and seismic improvements.

University District Update from 2004 (Taken from Council Member Jan Drago's webpage located at http://www.seattle.gov/council/drago/news/2003_03.htm#udistrict)

We began the process of reviewing the lease lid and related issues back in March with a COW on March 31st. We held a both a public forum and public hearing in April and had discussions on the issues in four joint meetings of my Finance Committee and Councilmember Nicastro's Land Use Committee meetings in April, May and June. We heard from many people on the issue and feel that we have reached a fair agreement that will allow us to reach our goals while allowing the University of Washington to remain a viable entity in the City.

Maintaining the ability of the University of Washington and entities funded by the University to enter into off-campus leases in the University District is not only important for the educational and research missions of the University, but also will contribute positively to the economic vitality of the University District, Seattle, the region and the state.

The agreement will eliminate the University of Washington's lease lid. However, there are many requirements that must be met in order for the lid to remain lifted after 2010. The UW has agreed to these requirements and will be a partner in the review of impacts of lifting the lease lid.

Elimination of the Permitted Leasing Zone, i.e., permitting UW leases anywhere within the City without restricting them to the Permitted Leasing Zone. A provision that the University will work to direct 75% of its leases into the University District Northwest Urban Center Village (UDNUCV) is added. Establishment of a five-year review to be led by an interdepartmental City team to analyze the benefits and impacts of UW leasing, including UW actions to encourage housing development. The review is intended to determine whether or not off-campus leasing and/or focusing leases in the UDNUCV would be continued or modified.

Increasing reporting requirements on a semiannual basis to provide information to track UW leases and their impacts and for conducting the five-year review.

Retaining existing limitations on UW street-level uses in leased facilities. Certain uses are permitted.

Examples of permitted uses include uses similar to retail or customer-service offices.

Requiring UW use and development of leased space to conform to City land use regulations.

One of the more important points in the agreement is the significant commitment by the University to use its influence to encourage the development of housing and to assist the City and the merchants in the area in developing and implementing a revitalization program. The Council and the City are committed to seeing the University District neighborhood revitalized. In addition to lifting the lease lid, the Council passed two additional resolutions that the Mayor is committed to following: the first will deal specifically with housing development in the U-District and the second will lay the groundwork for revitalization efforts.

This Resolution on housing directs the Executive to look at some very specific types of strategies that could be used in the University District to spur the development of market rate rental and homeownership housing. Some of the strategies to be looked at include: modifying parking requirements for residential developments, looking at height increases for mixed use projects that include a residential component, and improving the permit review process to minimize the uncertainty and time developers spend preparing projects for development.

The Executive will work with community groups and the Council in developing specific strategies. The Executive will submit these proposals no later than Sept. 1, 2004. I am hopeful that a number of these strategies will be forthcoming, well before that deadline.

This agreement represents a fair balance and allows the University of Washington, the City of Seattle's largest employer, to remain competitive and to provide a catalyst for revitalization efforts in the community.

Housing is unclear what role they will play in this sub-activity. Their participation in this project was changed from "Lead" to "participating" and contact name removed from public view. [per Rick Hooper]

Dena Gazin
11/15/04

2004 Priority Summary: Office of Housing (OH) and Dept. of Neighborhoods (DON) will meet with the community in the first quarter of 2005 to scope out next steps.

Dena Gazin
09/09/04

OH/DON need to meet with community.

Karen Ko
05/07/04

OH and DON need to meet with the community to scope out next steps; regular reporting doesn't make sense until there is something specific to report on. [Laura Hewitt Walker, OH]

Unknown User
03/03/04

Target Completion	-Ongoing	Estimated Cost	N/A	Status	In-Progress
Lead Agency/Contact	Neighborhoods; Karen Ko, 233-3732			Priority	Third

Implementor Neighborhoods**Matrix H2**

Activity *Determine the need for a nonprofit community development corporation for management of complex, mixed-use housing and other development projects (such as envisioned in University Gardens Core) working with area property owners and the community.*

H2: 1 of 1 **Sub-Activity** Establish task force to explore the need for a nonprofit community development corporation (CDC).

Sub-Act Housing is unclear what role they will play in this sub-activity. The contact name was removed from public view. [per Rick Hooper] **Comment(s)** Dena Gazin 11/15/04

2004 Priority Summary: The Department of Neighborhoods (DON) will work with the Office of Economic Development and local community develop groups on assessing the need for a Community Development Corporation (CDC) in their neighborhood. Dena Gazin 09/09/04

DON has agreed to take the lead on this activity working closely with OED, Local Community Development Corporations will be invited to meet with the Ave Group (acting as the stewardship group for the UCUC plan) to help the community assess the need for a cdc and help answer questions like: what can a cdc do? What can't it do? Is there capacity within an existing organization to take on the Univserity district too? [Gary Johnson/Karen Ko] Gary Johnson 09/09/04

The intent when the Ave Group (community stewardship group) prioritized this subactivity was to create an oversight mechanism for both housing development and management of University Heights. Karen Ko 05/07/04

It probably makes more sense for OED to be the lead on this. Next step should be to meet with the community. [Laura Hewitt Walker, OH] Unknown User 03/03/04

In conjunction with Ave Group, the Office of Housing takes the lead in determining both need and options. Also explore management of University Heights as part of the charge for the CDC. Karen Ko 02/06/04

Target Completion

Estimated Cost N/A

Status Not started

Lead Agency/Contact Neighborhoods; Karen Ko, 233-3732

Priority Fourth